5/14/76

The following is a summary of my research in the National Archives and in the files of Bernard Fensterwald during 11/12-75. As there has been very little published material published on the Mexico City trip, I have no way of knowing how much of this information is already known to researchers. Hopefully, everyone will find it useful to some extent.

On 9/17/63 Oswald visited the Mexican Consulate in New Orleans where he was issued 15 day tourist card #24085. The man whose tourist card was apparently issued directly before Oswald was William George Gaudet, who told the F.B.I. on 11/27 that he was a former employee of the C.I.A.(C.D. 75, pg. 588)

Comparing information garnered from Oswald's and Gaudet's torist card applications(CE 2478, CD 75, pg. 588), two things are possibly significant. First, all of the 19 people who appeared at the Consulate on 9/17 had their names listed in C.D. 75 in the order first name, middle, last name except for Oswald and Gaudet. The former's name was mistakenly inverted Harvey Oswald Lee and the latter's is listed Gaudet William George. This is probably innocent as Oswald's inversion is plausibly explained by the bunching together of Harvey Oswald on his application, thus suggesting Lee, Harvey Oswald. As Gaudet probably filled out his application "Gaudet, William George" and he appeaed before Oswald, this might have influenced the consulate employee to think Oswald's name was an inversion as well. Researchers are free to come up with other explanations for this coincidence.

Another minor point is that of the 19 appearing on 9/17, only Gaudet, Oswald, and one other person (Arthur C. Mason, 6 month tourist card # 4363760) listed "tourist" as the purpose of their trip.

Curiously enough, Gaudet's name appears in the Hearings and Exhibits on a completely different matter. CE 2880, an F.B.I. report relates that William Gearge Gaudet telephoned the New Orleans F.B.I. office on 11/27 stating "he had heard Jack Ruby from Dallas, Texas had purchased paintings from one Lorenzo Borenstein."

Gaudet was interviewed by Warren commission critic Bernard Fensterwald on May 13, 1975. Gaudet denied giving any information about Ruby to the F.B.I., and claimed CE 2880 was a complete fabrication. It is noteworthy that the interview of Gaudet concerning his apperance at the consulate the same day as Oswald(C.D. 75 pg. 588) and the report on his information about Ruby (CE 2880) were both taken by the same agent(John William Miller) on the same day(11/27/63).

It should be noted there is no evidence that Oswald and Gaudet were in the consulate at the same time. Gaudet didn't remember Oswald being there and he is cooborated by Elena Tejeda, an employee of the Mexican consulate who claimed "there was something about Oswald that made her remember him." Tejeda, who did not actually wait on Oswald, was interviewed by Gary Sanders, an investigator for Garrison, on 3/19/68. Tejeda stated she was sure Oswald was alone when he applied for his tourist card.

Also appearing at the consulate on 9/17/63 was David Pearce Maygar(#24088). Maygar told the F.B.I. he was a friend of David Ferrie, who figured heavily in the investigation of New Orleans D.A. Jim Garrison. I know of no other exhibits or documents indicating the F.B.I. explored Maygar's background further.

On the morning of 9/23/63 Marina Oswald and her baby daughter June left New Orleans for Irving, Texas. Very little is known about Oswald's movements the next two days. While his exact time of departu from New Orleans on the way to Mexico City is not known, there is strong evidence he did not leave the city until the morning of the 25th. Post office records show that an unemployment check Oswald cashed in a New Orleans grocery store did not arrive at his post office box until after 5:00am the 25th. The store, Winn Dixie #1425, did not open until 8:00am. I have done considerable research on this very subject with the hopes of establishing an earlier departure time for Oswald. But the Commission's evidence in this area is pretty' so;id.

There is strong evidence Oswald boarded a Trailways bus in Houston,Texas at 2:35am 9/26. Oswald probably continued along the Trailways bus system until he reached the U.S.-Mexican border at Laredo, Texas. Once int Mexico Oswald had to transfer to the Flecha Roja bus line for the rest of his journey to Mexico City. Unlike their American counterparts, Mexican bus lines often maintain passenger lists for long bus trips. Misleading F.B.I. exhibi aside, there was a passenger list made for Oswald's bus, but it disappeared under suspicious circumstances.

The F.B.I. apparently did not begin to ask for the passenger list until 3/64. On 4/2/64 Alejandro Saucedo, manager of the Flecha Roja bus terminal in Mexico City, told a "confidential source" that "shortly after the assassination" two investigators he believed to be from the Mexican Federal Police picked up the original passenger list. The men already had with them, according to Saucedo , the carbc which the driver had left at the terminal at Nuevo Laredo. (C.D. 979a

But the Mexican Federal Police denied sending anyone over to pick uo the lists. (C.D. 979a) As far as I know, the passenger list for Oswald's bus (Flecha Roja No. 516) was never recovered and the "investigators" never identified. The Commission ultimately used a baggage list (CE 2566) as well as the eyewitness testimony of Bryan and Meryl McFarland(WR 732-3) to placw Oswald on that bus.

The Warren Commission concluded that Albert Osborne sat beside Oswald on the bus from Nuevo Laredo to Mexico City. Osborne, a naturalized Canadian citizen who had apparently been working as an itinerant Baptist minister, was traveling under the assumed name of John Howard Bowen. Osborne, 74 at the time, claimed to have used both names since the 1920's, using the alias "in order to obtain a more American name and for the purpose of obtaining American citizenship and an American passport"(C.D. 393)

Osborne apparently had used the name Bowen for some time and was known to his Church friends by that name. He repeatedly lied to the F.B.I., claiming his true name was Bowen, and this tainted his steadfast denial that he sat beside Oswald. Four other passengers, the McFarlands, and Pamela Mumford and Patricia Winston, who boarded the bus later, positively identified him as sitting by Oswald.

The most interesting question about Osborne is his source of income. He claimed to receive money from"independent Baptist churches and members of Baptist churches with whom he was in contact" for his missionary work. He not only received enough money for himself to live on, but also told the F.B.I. he provided"books and financial assistance" (C.D. 393) to other evangelical churches. Osborne claimed to have worked as a gardner when funds were low.

The F.B.I. checked up on a few donors to Osborne's work, but

does not appeared to have done an extensive study of his income. Specifically, Osborne spent several hundred dollars in traveling expenses alone during the two months following his journey with Oswald. After his trip from Laredo to Mexico City, he returned to Laredo on 10/1. Then he traveled to New Orleans where he obtained a new Canadian passport in his real name on 10/10. Then he went back to Laredo for a few days before traveling to New York City by bus. Around 11/14/63 Osborne flew to London, England, where he "visited relatives" and the n flew to Madrid, Spain to visit a "Baptist church." On 12/5/63 he returned to New York City. (C.D. 393)

The Commission apparently was not too concerned about Osborne. He was never called as a witness nor did he file a deposition. As early as 3/30/64 Hoover wrote a letter to J. Lee Rankin, stating "in view of the foregoing(the F.B.I. had found no link between Oswald and Osborne) .. no further investigation is being conducted concerning Osborne's back ground unless a specific request is received by you." Two F.B.I. reports dated in 7/64 indicate such a request may have been made, although both are still witheld.

Oswald's surveillance by the C.I.A. while in Mexico City has raised many questions, but I have found nothing in my research to appreciably contribute to this subject. Those interested should consult the recently published anthology The Assassinations , Scott, Hoch, Stetler, eds. , specifically the articles "The C.I.A. and the Man who was not Oswald" and "C.I.A. Activities and the Warrren Commission Investigation". Also, on the taped phone calls see the New York Times and the Washingron Star, 9/21/75.

Oswald arrived in Mexico City around 10:00am 9/27. After checking into the Hotel del Comercio , an inexpensive hotel a few blocks from the bus station, he probably went first to the Russian Embassy. (See C.D. 1216, for instance) Later the same morning he also visited the Cuban Embassy.

The Report concluded that Oswald's visits to both the Russian and Cuban Embassies were for the purpose of obtaining a visa to Cuba in transit to Russia. Yet while noting that one of the counsul that waited on Oswald at the Russian Embassy, Valerily Vladimirovich Kostikov, was serving covertly as a member of the Soviet K.G.B., the Warren Report did not mention that Kostikov was assigned to the "liquid affairs" division,"whose responsibilities included assassination and sabotage."(C.D. 928) While it has been widely accepted that the K.G.B. carries out political assassination, C.D. 928 is the first confirmation I know of that Kostikov was specifically involved in this area. It was released early this year.

The F.B.I. investigation of those who entered Mexico at Nuevo Laredo 9/26 and exited there 10/3 as Oswald did turned up several people with interesting travel schedules. The most notable is Manuel Vicente Porras Rivera, a Costa Rican citizen who was trying to obtain a visa to Cuba at the same time as Oswald.

C.D. 963 relates that Porras Rivera told unnamed authorities on 3/3/64 that he was concerned with the situation in Cuba and wamted to "ascertain the true conditions in Cuba and make this information available to the authorities in Costa Rica." Costa Rican authorities said they had nothing to do Porras Rivera.

Rivera said he first visited the CUban counsul in Meridia, Mexico, but his application for a visa there was turned down. He then traveled to Mexico City to apply at its Cuban cousul, but he arrive d there on a Saturday (9/28) and the compound was closed. Although Rivera remained in the capital city until 10/2. he claimed he never

attempted to visit the Embassy again.

Rivera left Mexico City the same day as Oswald, though apparently 12 hours later. (Oswald at 8:30am and Rivera at 8:30pm) Rivera, like Oswald, traveled to Laredo, Texas and then on to Dallas, "where he spent several days." Then Rivera traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana and stayed "four or five days"(C.D. 963) before returning to Costa Rica. The interview with Rivera does not indicate why he went to Dallas and New Orleans.

C.D. 1007, pg. 12 shows that Isaac Levy Leon, a male Cuban citizen 47 years of age entered Mexico at Nuevo Laredo the same day as Oswald. He is listed as proceeding from New Orleans with final destination of Mexico City. It should be noted however that Levy may not have come directly from New Orleans and he apparently entered Mexico between 12 and 6am(judging by the shift of the employee who stamped his tourist csrd) while Oswald supposedly crossed the border between 1:30 and 2:00pm.

The number of sightings of Oswald during his week long trip to Mexico City could be important. Aside from the well known Sylvia Odio case, others include:

1) Lee Dannelly, a selective service employee in Austin, Texas believed Oswald visited her office on 9/25 seeking help on his dishonorable discharge. (CE 2137)

2) J.G. Hardin, employee of a City Directory firm, believed Oswald picked him up while Hardin was hitchiking on the main road between Houston and Dallas on 10/3. Hardin believed Oswald was driving a 53 Ford.(C.D. 75?, pg. 27d)

3) Laymon Stewart, General manager of radio station KOPY in Alice, Texas believed Oswald applied for a job at his station on either 9/28 or 10/4. He remembered the man had a wife who could not speak English and a baby child. He believed Oswald was driving a 53 or 54 Chevrolet sedan.(C.D. 75, pg. 566)

4) Bernard Thompson, a chauffuer in Washinton,D.C., told the F.B.I. that on 9/27 Oswald angrily told him to move his car that he stationed in front of the Hotel Willard at 14 and "F" streets in the naton's capital. (C.D. 320, pg. 650)

Any researcher with information on the points raised in this paper is encouraged to contact me.

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